

## WARNING From Voices of the Past

by  
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We cannot escape the importance of the writings of the early church fathers, especially those prior to the First Council of Nicaea in A.D.325, because they were still heavily influenced by the oral tradition of the apostolic teachings. It is, therefore, important to recognize that these men all held to a historic pre-millennial view, and the concept of a pre-tribulation resurrection-“rapture” of church only saints was inconcievable to them.

That notion, along with many other corruptions of the apostolic teachings and of scripture, came later, but one thing is certain; if the dispensationalist doctrine of a pre-tribulation resurrection-“rapture” of church only saints had surfaced at that time, it would have been universally exposed as heresy.

### Pre-Nicene Council

Justin Martyr (A.D. 100-168):

Two advents of Christ have been announced: the one, in which He is set forth as suffering, inglorious, dishonored, and crucified; but the other, in which He shall come from heaven with glory, when the man of apostasy, who speaks strange things againsst the Most High, shall venture to do unlawful deeds on the earth **against us the Christians**. (*First Apology of Justine*, Chapter 110)

Irenaeus (A.D. 140-202), student of Polycarp who was taught by the apostle, John:

And then he...(Daniel)...points out the time that his tyranny shall last, during which **the saints shall be put to flight**. (*Against Heresies V, XXVL*, 1) And they shall lay Babylon waste, and burn her with fire, and shall give their kingdom to the beast , and **put the church to flight**. (*Against Heresies V, XXVI*)

Tertulian (A.D. 160-220):

That the beast Antichrist, with his false prophet, may **wage war on the Church of God**. (*On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, 25)

Cyprian (A.D. 200-258):

The Lord hath foretold that these things would come. With the exhoratation of His foreseeing word, instructing, and teaching, and preparing, and strengthening the people of His Church for all endurance of things to come. **He previously warned us** that the adversary would increase more and more in the last times. (Treatise 7)

For you ought to know and to believe, and hold it for certain, that the day of affliction has begun to hang over our heads, and the end of the world and the time of Antichrist to draw near, so that **we must all stand prepared for the battle**...The time cometh, that

whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service...Nor let any one wonder that we are harassed with increasing afflictions, when the Lord before predicted that these things would happen in the last times. (*Epistles of Cyprian, LV, 1,2*)

Nor let any one of you, beloved brethren, be so terrified by the fear of future persecution, or the coming of the threatening Antichrist, as not to be found armed for all things by the evangelical exhortations and precepts, and by the heavenly warnings. (*Cyprian, LIII, p.722*)

Hippolytus (A.D. 160-240):

...the one thousand two hundred and three score days (the half of the week) during which the tyrant is to reign and **persecute the Church**...(*Treatise on Christ and Antichrist, 61*)

Victorinus of Poetovia (? -303)

The little season signifies three years and six months, in which with all his power the devil will avenge himself under Antichrist **against the Church**. (*Commentary on the Apocalypse, 20:1-3*)

### Post-Nicene Council

Augustine (A.D. 354-430):

...the kingdom of Antichrist shall fiercely, though for a short time, **assail the Church**...(*The City of God, XX, 23*)

Roger Bacon (A.D. 1214-1274):

...future perils [**for the Church**] in the times of Antichrist...(*Opus Majus II, page 634*)

Martin Luther (A.D. 1483-1546):

[The book of Revelation] is intended as a revelation of things that are to happen in the future, and especially of **tribulations and disasters for the Church**... (*Works of Martin Luther, VI, p. 481*)

John Knox (A.D. 1515-1572):

[T]he great love of God towards his Church, whom he pleased to forewarne of dangers to come...to wit, The man of sin, The Antichrist...(*The Historie of the Reformation etc., I, p.76*)

Roger Williams (A.D. 1603-1683):

Antichrist...hath his prisons, to keep Christ Jesus and his members fast. (*The Bloody Tenent etc, p. 153*)

Charles Hodge (A.D. 1797-1878):

...the fate of his Church here on earth...is the burden of the Apocalypse. (*Systematic Theology, III*, p. 827)

Carl F. Keil (A.D. 1807-1888):

...the persecution of the last enemy Antichrist **against the Church of the Lord...**(*Biblical Commentary, YXMV*, p. 503)

There is no suggestion here that we should assume that the unified view of these early church fathers is correct. But we cannot escape the importance of the fact that they **all** believed that the followers of Christ will face the Antichrist during the Great Tribulation, and that this teaching **IS** what was taught by the apostles.

Nor can we ignore the fact that there are no legitimate writings during this entire time that present a different view...until John N. Darby's presentation of the theory of a pre-tribulation resurrection-"rapture" of church only saints at the Powerscourt Prophecy Conference in 1832.

Are we really going to take the word of those deceived men today who please the itching ears of modern "children" (tossed to and fro by winds of doctrine) over these early church fathers who were still walking in the apostolic tradition?

Here are a few others you may recognize who are in agreement with the apostolic tradition of the early church fathers:

Jay Adams, Randy Alcorn, Henry Alford, Matthew Arnold, J. Sidlow Baxter, Allistair Begg, Jonas Clark, Corrie Ten Bloom, David Brainerd, F. F. Bruce, John Bunyan, John Calvin, B. H. Carroll, William Cowper, John Gill, Robert Gundry, Hank Hanegraaff, Carl F. H. Henry, William Hendriksen, Matthew Henry, Herschell Hobbs, Adoniram Judson, D. James Kennedy, John Knox, George Eldon Ladd, Hugh Latimer, C. S. Lewis, J. B. Lightfoot, Harold Lindsell, C. S. Lovett, Martin Luther, Walter Martin, Dave McPherson, Jack McAlister, James McKeever, Alexander McLaren, Albert Mohler, Russell Moore, John Warwick Montgomery, Doug Moo, Dale Moody, G. Campbell Morgan, H. C. G. Moule, George Mueller, Andrew Murray, Sir Isaac Newton, John Newton, Harold J. Ockenga, J. Edwin Orr, Ian Paisley, Wilfred Pink, John Piper, Bernard Ramm, Paul Rees, A. T. Robertson, Marv Rosenthal, Oswald J. Smith, Charles Spurgeon, John R. W. Stott, A. H. Strong, Merrell Tenny, J. H. Thayer, B. B. Warfield, Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, John Wesley, George Whitefield, William Wilberforce, Ulrich Zwingli.

Even more important is the fact that none of the following taught a pre-tribulation resurrection-"rapture" of church only saints: Jesus Christ, the apostle, Paul, the apostle, Peter, the apostle, John.

**PAY ATTENTION**, saints, the "four horsemen" are in the wings, and those who have been deceived by the heretical doctrines of Dispensationalism, including the pre-tribulation resurrection-"rapture" of the church are not ready for the things soon to come.

But we have been warned:

***See, I have warned you in advance...*** Matthew 24:25

